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General Assembly

Seventy-first session

Official Records

10th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 20 September 2016, 6.20 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Thomson ..... (Fiji)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Zamora Rivas (El Salvador), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 6.20 p.m.

Address by Mr. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Republic of Portugal

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Portugal.

Mr. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Republic of Portugal, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Republic of Portugal, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Rebelo de Sousa: First of all, I would like to congratulate the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Peter Thomson, on his election and commend him for the theme chosen for the seventy-first session of the General Assembly. Following the success a year ago of the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, we need a universal push to transform our world. The General Assembly may rest assured that it can count on Portugal's committed contribution. I would also like to extend Portugal's recognition to the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for his capacity for dialogue, vision for the future and commitment to promoting a more efficient United Nations.

(spoke in Portuguese. English text provided by the delegation)

In an increasingly complex world, the Organization will always be an irreplaceable institution in the eyes of its Members. I therefore reiterate Portugal's unwavering and enduring commitment to the United Nations, the Charter and its guiding purposes and principles, as well as its strict respect for international law. The historic agreements, on the Sustainable Development Goals and climate change, reached in 2015 and 2016, respectively, the World Humanitarian Summit and the General Assembly special session on the world drug problem were all major achievements that exemplified effective, United Nations-centred multilateralism.

The General Assembly's special session on the world drug problem, held in April, was an important step forward taken by the international community to realize an integrated and humanist vision. Having held such a vision for over a decade, Portugal regards it as the necessary and successful global response. In this as in other domains, we must now make additional efforts and focus primarily on prevention.

A culture of prevention should also be developed in the area of maintaining peace and security by promoting sustainable development and respect for human rights, with the ultimate aim of safeguarding human dignity, relieving suffering and ending poverty. To this end, I would like to highlight this year's review of the United Nations peace and security architecture, including the women and peace and security dimension. It provided an opportunity to reinforce United Nations preventive

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capabilities. For example, strengthening preventive action in Africa is essential to prevent many of the crises the continent is facing from developing, while respecting African ownership of the processes. Portugal will continue to contribute to this effort, in particular by deploying military contingents in such peacekeeping operations as the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic.

It is also worth noting our commitment to promoting maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, as can be seen in our current presidency of the Group of Seven Group of Friends of the Gulf of Guinea. We continue to support Guinea-Bissau and we are confident that constructive political dialogue will be undertaken to reach a sustainable solution within the constitutional framework in order to meet the legitimate aspirations of the Guinean people. We also believe that a meeting of the International Contact Group on Guinea-Bissau needs to be held with the utmost urgency in order to reassert the international community's consensus in favour of long-awaited structural reforms.

On the other side of the Atlantic, we welcomed the talks held in Havana, which led to a peace agreement for Colombia, one of Portugal's partners at Ibero-American summits. That agreement paves the way for national reconciliation among all Colombians, which will allow them to live together in peace and in respect for the rule of law and the views of others. We will participate in the peacekeeping process by contributing personnel to the prospective United Nations mission, as well as financially through the European Union Trust Fund for Colombia.

It is the Israeli-Palestinian issue, however, that demonstrates that there is still a way to go in terms of peacebuilding. That is why I would reiterate Portugal's support for international efforts aimed at bringing about the resumption of peace talks. We hope that United Nations resolutions can provide a basis for a sustainable solution to the conflict with a view to ensuring the existence of a sovereign, independent and viable Palestinian State living side by side with the State of Israel, whose legitimate security aspirations must be guaranteed.

Furthermore, we are also very concerned about the recent escalation of threats to security and stability on the Korean peninsula, which we condemn. We call for resumed collaboration among neighbours and the international community aimed at having the Democratic People's Republic of Korea suspend its nuclear programme.

From the subway station in Brussels to Mogadishu airport, from a club in Orlando to Quetta hospital in Pakistan, the pure inhumanity of these terrorist attacks is not just against the targeted countries and the victims; rather, it is against all those who endorse the principles and values of the United Nations Charter — the 193 States gathered here today — and it is against humankind as a whole. Terrorism cannot be tolerated. The United Nations, through its mandate from the international community, has the lawful right and the moral duty to end this scourge, and specifically one of its major proponents, Da'esh. We shall not give in to fear, nor shall we forfeit our values or principles, particularly with regard to human rights. It is through the values of peace, tolerance, human dignity and solidarity that we should fight radicalization and violent extremism, as well as the xenophobia and demagogic populism that threaten our societies.

The Middle East, North Africa and Europe are confronting a humanitarian crisis of tragic proportions resulting from the exodus of refugees and migrants, many of whom are very young children. We must get to the root of the problem and eradicate the terror and fear that have befallen the region, finding a politically sustainable solution for the conflict in Syria based on the recently negotiated ceasefire.

Another issue underlying this humanitarian crisis is the growing wave of immigration that is essentially the result of a lack of opportunities in the migrants' countries of origin. Resolving conflicts, stabilizing political situations and investing in countries' development are surely the best way to contribute to the stability and prosperity of all. Portugal has turned the willingness it expressed from the beginning of the crisis into the act of hosting migrants who need international protection. We have gone far beyond the European Union quota set out for us. Indeed, we have accepted twice the number of migrants than required under this quota. We will continue to take in these migrants and abide by the effective integration practices that characterize the welcoming and multicultural Portuguese society.

I would like to stress the importance of promoting higher education for refugees in emergency situations

so that a generation of migrants is not lost. Portugal has already accepted over 100 Syrian university students and calls for similar involvement on the part of many other countries. I myself am a university professor, and I have taught students from Syria.

With regard to the right to education, I would recall that 50 years ago the General Assembly adopted the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. I call on all Member States that have not yet done so to join these important instruments.

In addition, on the issue of human rights, we have come a long way in terms of gender equality, although much still needs to be done. Gender issues are a topic of cross-cutting importance, particularly in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the women and peace and security agenda. Furthermore, as a member of the Human Rights Council, Portugal remains committed to the defence and promotion of human rights and the strengthening of bodies set up by human rights treaties.

The issue of oceans and seas is a priority for Portugal. History advises it, geography imposes it and the future demands it. In this regard, I would mention the Oceans Meeting 2016, which we hosted in Lisbon earlier this year. We will continue to work towards mobilizing global efforts aimed at the conservation and sustainable exploitation of the oceans. Accordingly, Portugal is looking forward to being an engaged participant at the first United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14, on oceans, seas and marine resources, which will be held in New York in 2017. Furthermore, with regard to the link to climate change, I reiterate Portugal's commitment to small island developing States in supporting the efforts needed to overcome the challenges they face, which are the responsibility of the international community as a whole.

Finally, as the process of appointing the next Secretary-General is under way, I would like to express my sincerest wish that whoever takes up this position has the human and professional qualities required to meet the challenge. He or she should possess the ability to bring together hearts and minds and embody the values and courses of action that Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela exemplified in their lives. We need someone who transcends their group or circle, uniting and representing everyone and not just a chosen few, who will build bridges, listen and demonstrate the innate wisdom and leadership skills to make decisions with which everyone can identify and in which everyone feels included.

As Vergílio Ferreira, a great Portuguese writer, said, "Mine is the language of the sea." The Portuguese language is shared by 250 million speakers, represented by the nine States members of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, which celebrates its twentieth anniversary this year, inspired, therefore, by the ocean — to some it is the Atlantic, to others it is the Pacific — which brings life to the planet and unites us all, I have come to address the General Assembly today. I wish the Assembly every success in the seventy-first session that we are now launching, reiterating that we support new President of the Assembly and welcome his leadership. Portugal's position is, has been and always will be to provide firm, enthusiastic support to the United Nations as it fulfils its role in building peace, liberty, development and justice throughout the world.

The Acting President *(spoke in Spanish)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Portugal for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Republic of Portugal, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto, President of the United Mexican States

The Acting President *(spoke in Spanish)*: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the United Mexican States.

Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto, President of the United Mexican States, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President *(spoke in Spanish)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto, President of the United Mexican States, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Peña Nieto *(spoke in Spanish)*: It is an honour and a privilege to stand here once again at this high rostrum at the United Nations, the home of universal peace, cooperation and brotherhood. Mexico has always been a staunch ally of the United Nations and a nation that firmly believes in its transformative

power. From this Hall, vital collective efforts have been undertaken in pursuit of humankind's noblest causes.

For over seven decades, global voices have called for a better future. Each generation has taken on the challenges of its time with determination. It is incumbent upon us to continue in the same spirit to confront the enormous challenge of making sustainable development of the planet a reality. We have already taken the first step in that direction, specifically by defining the Sustainable Development Goals. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which we formulated and agreed on here at the United Nations, is without a doubt the boldest, noblest and most demanding action plan that the international community has adopted in recent history. It is a road map for national and subnational Governments, just as it is for all of society's stakeholders that have the mission of improving the lives of billions of people and leaving no one behind. Because of its scope and goals, the 2030 Agenda is the framework that harmonizes the agreements reached last year in the areas of human rights, environment and sustainable peace.

What have the national efforts of Mexico been in this arena? First of all, we have taken on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as a national commitment. Along the same lines, work is under way to establish a high-level council for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which will be headed by the President of the republic. Its purpose will be to coordinate the work of the various stakeholders, including local authorities, lawmakers, and representatives of civil society, academia and the private sector. Mexico has also set up a specialized technical committee composed of the main federal institutions, tasked with measuring and monitoring the Agenda's indicators. Similarly, we are creating a public monitoring dashboard in order to transparently share our successes and remaining challenges with the public. As part of that commitment to transparency and accountability, Mexico was one of the 22 countries that on 19 July presented their voluntary national review documents to the high-level political forum.

Mexico is also committed to promoting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the regional level. In April next year we will chair the Forum of the Countries of Latin American and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development. Given that human rights are now a cross-cutting element in the 2030 Agenda, my country has adopted a national social inclusion strategy focused on ensuring the full enjoyment of social rights, thereby reducing poverty and increasing equality.

We applaud the recognition in the 2030 Agenda of migrants as subjects of rights and as vital allies in the development of their countries of destination and origin. As I stated yesterday at the plenary meeting (see A/71/PV.4B), Mexico will work actively for the creation of agreements on migration and refugees. To that end, we have offered to host an international preparatory meeting for reaching a better definition of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. In the face of these challenges, we should leave behind our indifference and promote the shared responsibility and joint action of the international community with regard to migrants and refugees.

Another cross-cutting theme of the 2030 Agenda is gender perspective and the empowerment of women. In keeping with the commitments of last year's Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: A Commitment to Action, Mexico now has a more robust institutional framework in its national system for equality between women and men. The fact that that system is headed by Mexico's President ensures that the policy of equality is upheld at the highest level and is reflected in the national Government's actions.

Additionally, driven by a sense of urgency, Mexico has adopted the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. A few days ago my country's Ssenate ratified that international treaty, which will be submitted for entry into force at tomorrow's high-level meeting. Our priority now is to develop national mechanisms to coordinate, verify and report on compliance with the commitments assumed under that agreement.

We must henceforward change the way we live, produce and consume. We must harmonize economic development with social inclusion and environmental protection. One example of that balance can be seen in my country's energy reform, which includes a law of energy transition whereby, by 2018, 25 per cent of its electric energy will be generated using clean sources, reaching 70 per cent by 2040. Similarly, at the regional level, the three North American nations have committed to reducing our oil and gas sectors' methane emissions by between 40 and 45 per cent by 2025.

As part of its global responsibility to the environment, Mexico will host the thirteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in December. That forum seeks to align actions to

protect and preserve our natural heritage with the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and those of the 2030 Agenda. By the same token, next year we will host the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, which will assess the first two years of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and will set goals for reducing and mitigating development risks.

Thirdly, Mexico has reaffirmed its pacifist vocation and its commitment to achieving sustainable global peace. The international community has confirmed that the stability of countries affected by armed conflict depends not only on their security conditions, but also on their respect for human rights, on the effectiveness of their institutions and the rule of law, and on their ability to foster inclusive development. This cross-cutting vision is fully in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. In that regard, the Goals are key to preventing and avoiding social and political crises and will also be crucial to finding peaceful solutions to the armed conflicts in many countries.

The most recent example is the peace agreement reached in Colombia. Mexico applauds that achievement, and we will show our solidarity with the attainment of its goals. Similarly, in the pursuit of reduced tension and greater understanding in our region, Mexico repeats its call for the lifting of the economic, trade and financial blockade imposed upon Cuba.

If peace is to last, it must be sustainable. To that end, the new paradigm entails focusing efforts on conflict prevention and using a proactive, strategic and long-term approach. We recognize that one of the greatest threats is the existence of nuclear weapons. Historically, Mexico has been a proponent of disarmament and has emphatically condemned nuclear tests. We will continue to work towards a world free of that global threat.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the positive work of Mr. Ban Ki-moon at the head of the United Nations Secretariat. Mexico appreciates his dedication and commitment. Thanks to his vision and leadership, agreements of great importance for the future of the planet have been reached in recent years. That is no minor feat, especially given the highly volatile and complex international context in which he has had to perform his duties.

In recent decades, the world has made great progress, including major improvements in the quality of the lives of millions of people. Even so, it is also true that many societies are clearly dissatisfied with their current conditions. That situation creates a divide between citizens and their authorities, which fuels mistrust in institutions and heightens uncertainty about the future. In Latin America, for example, the the clear deterioration in public support for democracy revealed by the Latinobarómetro survey is extremely grave. Faced with that challenge, the world cannot fall into the trap of demagoguery or authoritarianism.

The only viable path ahead, the only true response to a demanding citizenry, is democracy itself. The response must be more openness, more transparency and better accountability. As Governments, we must be able to listen to and to deal with an increasingly well-informed citizenry that has more means at its disposal for expressing opinions and participating in public affairs. Social networks are enabling greater public participation, turning each individual into a potential agent for change.

In that context, Governments must make greater efforts to better communicate with the societies they serve. Governments must communicate to publicize achievements, to recognize and explain missteps, but above all to map out the road ahead together with their societies. It is essential that we promote public debate, contrast ideas and assume shared commitments, using the new communication technologies that are increasingly available and accessible to the entire population. Let us recognize in our pluralism and ongoing dialogue the ideal tools for building in democracy a better future. The response to disillusionment with democracy lies in democracy itself. Our Governments must foster societies that are increasingly inclusive and participatory, where all citizens enjoy the benefits of development.

Going forward, we already have a clearly defined road map, based on the Sustainable Development Goals. These are very clear Goals for overcoming poverty and ensuring equal opportunity, gender equity, protection of the environment and justice and peace on which all our countries must concentrate our efforts. Mexico reaffirms its strong commitment to democratic principles as the only path to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the United Mexican States for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto, President of the United Mexican States, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by His Majesty Don Felipe VI, King of the Kingdom of Spain

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the King of the Kingdom of Spain.

His Majesty Don Felipe VI, King of the Kingdom of Spain, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Majesty Don Felipe VI, King of the Kingdom of Spain, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

King Felipe (*spoke in Spanish*): Two years ago, I addressed the General Assembly for the first time as King of Spain (see A/69/PV.6). I feel at present the same honour and the same responsibility as I did on that occasion, because the United Nations is the universal forum for peace and progress for humankind, the place where we must secure the future of our planet.

That is how the Spanish people understand the demands on us. Today, we cannot disappoint the billions of people who, like Spanish society, believe in the purposes, principles and values of the 1945 San Francisco Charter and of the 2015 Declaration on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations that Spain helped to promote in defence of what the United Nations represents. With that Declaration, we wanted to tell the world that the Charter was not simply a beacon that lit the dark times of the past, but that it also illuminates our present and our future. For it is the beacon to which the children in refugee camps direct their eyes, as do the mothers who protect their children while crossing the Mediterranean — a plight which deeply moves us. It is the hope for those who have lost loved ones owing to natural disasters or hunger, those who defend human rights and common human dignity, and those who are persecuted as victims of terrorism in all its despicable forms. It is also the inspiration for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to which we have all committed ourselves with a view to putting an end to hunger and extreme poverty and to designing a model for development that is sustainable in the course of a generation.

For Spain, the 2030 Agenda is a source of inspiration for our domestic and foreign actions. We must fight inequality and work towards an economic model that fosters shared prosperity and provides employment opportunities for young people and, in general, for all those who have suffered most from the impact of the crisis in recent years. No one should be left behind because of what we do or fail to do.

In order to advance the cause that concerns us all, combating the effects of climate change is critical. I am pleased to underline that, nearly a year ago in Paris, we were able to reach a crucial agreement in this matter. Our compliance is an unavoidable priority for us all, and one on which we will be called to account by present and future generations. The upcoming twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Morocco, will offer an excellent opportunity to further strengthen our commitment.

Finally, the Charter today serves as a beacon for Colombia. The Spanish people welcome the peace agreement reached in that beloved country, which has the strong support of our Government on both the bilateral and the multilateral level. Our Congress of Deputies has unanimously supported it. Spain will stand beside the Colombian people so that they can achieve the fruits of peace for all Colombians, who will have the last word in the plebiscite scheduled for 2 October.

The European, Ibero-American and Mediterranean dimensions that constitute the identity of the Spanish people testify to our universal vocation. We are amon the countries that have had the greatest impact on history, and we are proud of our substantial contribution to the common heritage of humankind.

This year, we celebrate the 400th anniversary of the death of Cervantes, a universally acknowledged literary genius, who was able to convey his belief that portraying a noble and generous spirit is the best way to live in the world. For us, the children of Cervantes, knowing how to live means, above all else, knowing how to live with others. When we coexist in a democratic framework that safeguards our hard-won rights and freedoms, together with our respect for our diversity, that is when we give the best of ourselves and contribute in more and better ways to the peace, security and prosperity of the international community, as we will continue to do.

All advanced democracies, such as ours, go through difficult times at some point in their history. But they come through them thanks to the strength and unity of their societies, the robustness of their institutions and the effectiveness of their system of freedoms, and thanks to the firm belief that differences must be resolved in accordance with rules that have been laid down. In recent decades, the Spanish people have, with a constructive spirit, demonstrated that they have embraced the values of dialogue, commitment, sense of duty and solidarity. Those are the values that transform nations into models for freedom around the world and promote the progress and well-being of their citizens.

Spaniards have always come through difficult times, even after being hit by a severe global economic crisis, during which our society showed an enormous capacity to overcome adversity. We must continue to drive and reinforce the recovery on a firm, broad-based foundation, as well as to safeguard and improve the welfare state and a model of genuinely sustainable growth, diversifying our foreign presence and, above all, giving special attention to those who have suffered most and who continue to suffer the repercussions of the recession.

The Kingdom of Spain's membership in the Security Council during the 2015-2016 biennium shows that our country is shouldering its responsibilities, meeting its commitments and participating constructively in the quest for solutions to the problems we face today, such as the large movements of people that are a shocking sign of our times and are being given special attention during a week of ministerial meetings. Spain is on the homestretch of its mandate in the Security Council and is working with determination, accountability and transparency, guided by the desire to make acceptable and effective commitments to prevent conflicts and resolve existing ones. We have spearheaded efforts in the humanitarian field and are encouraging the increased participation of women in both conflict prevention and peacebuilding, thereby combating gross violations and abuses of their freedom and dignity. In the immediate future and within the framework of an open and inclusive process, we will seek the adoption of a resolution to prevent non-State actors and terrorists from having access to weapons — especially those with mass destruction capabilities that increase their ability to carry out assaults or attacks. We will also attempt to move forward international judicial cooperation against terrorism and step up measures against sexual violence in conflict.

During this period in the Security Council, we have faced crises every day that stir our conscience and about which, despite much frustration, we refuse to become apathetic. Five and a half years of conflict in Syria have led to the death of more than 300,000 people, brought about the forced disappearance of more than half of Syria's people and divided the country, leaving it at serious risk of irreversible fragmentation. The stability of the entire region has been threatened, especially that of neighbouring nations, whose generosity in hosting Syrian refugees should be acknowledged. We regret the breach of the ceasefire agreement, and we express our sympathy for the victims, especially those who were humanitarian workers. We hope and call for another cessation of hostilities. In that context, Spain is working to improve humanitarian assistance. There is no military solution to the conflict, and the political solution must preserve the unity of the country in an inclusive, democratic framework.

Iraq suffers the ravages of terrorism at the hands of Da'esh, which is already retreating thanks to the perseverance of the Iraqi Government and the support of an international coalition, of which Spain is a member. I reiterate our full support for the Government of Iraq in its efforts to build a democratic country in which members of all religious faiths and ethnicities can coexist and where human rights and the principle of territorial integrity are respected. Moreover, we are not giving up on any other seemingly deadlocked situation, whether in Yemen, Libya or Afghanistan.

Spain supports United Nations efforts for a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution that would allow for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara on terms compatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. In April, the Security Council renewed the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara for one year. In that regard, Spain welcomes the restoration of the Mission's capabilities, in line with Security Council resolution 2285 (2016). We encourage the parties to resume their dialogue with a view to finally resolving that dispute.

Spain has consolidated its relations with the African continent, whose strength and dynamism we commend and to which we are giving special and preferential treatment. We are following with concern

the developments in the conflicts in South Sudan, Mali, Somalia and the Central African Republic. Spanish military operations have been deployed in those three countries in the framework of European Union operations, as well as in the various United Nations missions throughout the world.

In mentioning them here, I wish to pay tribute to all the Blue Helmets who are working to achieve peace in those missions, sometimes at the cost of their lives. Here, it would be only right to acknowledge the work of the African Union and subregional organizations that also make an extraordinary contribution to maintaining peace on the continent — an achievement in which Spain will continue to play an active part.

On a map of the world where shadows abound, hope also exists. Spain welcomed the agreement on the Iranian nuclear programme and also commends Iran's verification of compliance with the conditions to end the sanctions regime and open the door to a new trade regime with fixed restrictions. Our country is engaging in rigorous coordination efforts to assess trade requests.

Few pieces of news would be more encouraging than the announcement of the resumption of peace talks between Israel and Palestine. Spain supports the holding of an international conference to help encourage the negotiating parties in the course of this year, which marks 25 years since the Madrid Conference. The two-State solution, with mutually agreed upon and secure borders, is the only way to achieve a fair and lasting peace. Denial and confrontation between communities must lead the way to peaceful coexistence. In that context, Spain will promote initiatives to encourage harmony among the civil societies of both parties.

Two and a half years ago, on our continent, Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity were violated. The European Union, Ukraine and Russia must be able to steer a course that will benefit us all in terms of European security and prosperity, on terms that respect the principles of international law and the values of democracy.

We follow with great concern the serious and repeated violations of the non-proliferation regime by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We call on them to focus their efforts on a genuine search for a climate of understanding and dialogue with the international community.

As for the European Union, the great project of coexistence is now at a major crossroads. As Jean Monnet indicated, the European project is not a given; it is something we have to create every day, on the basis of a community of both interests and people. The European Union is an act of resolve, of trust in the ability of our peoples to overcome past mistakes and not repeat them. Its sustainability and strengthening are key to peace and prosperity on our continent and are enormously positive factors, both as an example and because of the deployment of capabilitities that can benefit the United Nations as a whole. No one would gain if it were to become paralysed or fail.

We Spaniards are proud of belonging to the European Union, from which we have obtained undeniable benefits and to which we have made important contributions, including a number of sacrifices when these were necessary for the common good of Europe. In the current circumstances, we are ready to continue in the vanguard of the European Union's growth in all areas.

As Spain has always done from this rostrum, let me say that Gibraltar is the only remaining colony in Europe. In compliance with the United Nations mandate, I invite the United Kingdom to put an end that anachronism by an agreed solution between our two countries that restores the territorial integrity of Spain and benefits the population of the colony and the Gibraltar region.

This year is the last in the mandate of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. I would like to thank him on behalf of Spain for his outstanding service and to express my personal gratitude and appreciation. Spain welcomes the criteria of transparency and participation that are to guide us in selecting his successor. I trust that we will be able to make the best possible choice.

Spain is a candidate for the Human Rights Council for the 2018-2020 period. I ask for the General Assembly's support for its candidature. The promotion and defence of human rights are a hallmark of our foreign policy. We are particularly committed to promoting gender equality, the right to drinking water and sanitation, the rights of people with disabilities and the fight against racism, xenophobia and hate crimes.

The United Nations has in Spain a Member that is committed to the values embodied in this Organization. We know that they rely on us to deal with the main challenges of today. We do this in the spirit of Don

Quixote and the loyalty of Sancho Panza. As our universal classic tells us, "everyone is the architect of his own fortune". We Spaniards want to be the architects of a United Nations where fairness, happiness, the attainment of human rights and respect for human dignity will prevail at all times.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the King of the Kingdom of Spain for the statement he has just made.

His Majesty Don Felipe VI, King of the Kingdom of Spain, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Zambia.

Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia, and to invite him to address the General Assembly.

President Lungu: It is indeed a great honour and privilege for me to address the General Assembly at its seventy-first session. May I join others in congratulating Mr. Thomson on his election to preside over the deliberations of this session. I am confident that, under his able leadership, the General Assembly will successfully address the pressing issues on its current agenda. I am also confident that he will steer the Organization in the right direction and that we will have fruitful discussions on the well-considered theme of this session, entitled "The Sustainable Development Goals: a universal push to transform our world".

Allow me to also convey my appreciation to Mr. Ban Ki-moon, who will be concluding his mandate as Secretary-General this year. Through his leadership, Mr. Ban Ki-moon has distinguished himself as a world leader committed to tackling key global challenges, such as reducing poverty and addressing climate change. He has been instrumental in ushering in the Sustainable Development Goals, the successor of the Millennium Development Goals. He has distinguished himself as a global leader, focused on fairness and justice for all nations. Therefore, as he winds up his onerous responsibility as Secretary-General, I would like to convey to him, on behalf of the Zambian people, our best wishes in his future endeavours. Well done. And we thank him once more for his great efforts to improve the lot of humankind.

We are meeting during a special period, when our countries are embarking upon the implementation of the current global development blueprint, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Africa appreciates the important synergies of the 2030 Agenda and our own Africa Union Agenda 2063 — the Africa We Want, which was adopted by the African Union Heads of State and Government at the African Union Summit in January 2015. This convergence is a clear demonstration that our continental aspirations and those of the broader international community are well aligned in terms of achieving a better world for all global citizens.

My Government accords the highest priority to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and we believe that there can be no meaningful development without the elimination of poverty. In that context, special attention should be focused on the least developed countries. They are more vulnerable and need more support to strengthen their economies in order to overcome the challenges they face.

In our quest to address the issues of poverty, unemployment, hunger and income inequality, Zambia has taken specific measures aimed at promoting economic transformation. Those measures include, but are not limited to, the development of value-chain clusters, the diversification of the agriculture sector, the promotion of forestry and the establishment of multi-facility economic zones and industrial parks. We are strongly resolved to promote industrialization through the agriculture and manufacturing sectors in order to speed up the diversification of the economy away from an over-dependency on mining.

In that regard, my Government is addressing the challenges faced by micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, such as access to finance, markets and technology and the enhancement of entrepreneurial skills. These deliberate interventions are expected to spur enterprise growth and job creation. The renewed focus on economic diversification is expected to further transform our country from dependency on primary

products to the development of value-added products through industrialization.

In our quest to foster economic growth, my Government has developed its seventh five-year national development plan, which will take effect in January 2017. The plan focuses on enhancing productive capacities in the agriculture sector and promoting rural development, which will improve the livelihoods and well-being of rural communities.

Like most developing nations, Zambia is today faced with the challenges of population growth, and in particular the need to harness the demographic dividend. There is a mismatch between the growth in the youth population and their assimilation into the job market. That is why the Zambian Government is implementing necessary policies focused on skills development, entrepreneurship, education and infrastructure development. Zambia is ready to learn from, and share with, other countries best practices to address the challenges faced by our young people. It is therefore critical that youth remain actively engaged in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The development of appropriate infrastructure is cardinal in fulfilling Africa's desire to accelerate economic growth and in enhancing the continent's competitiveness on the global market. Africa must expand intra-African trade and bolster its productive capacities. In line with this, Zambia has embarked upon infrastructure development, including the construction and rehabilitation of roads, railways, bridges and airports.

As the current Chair of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, I wish to reiterate our call for the international community to remain committed to the guidelines of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024, which aims to improve the living conditions of the half a billion people who live in the 32 landlocked developing countries.

It is evident that climate change has had an adverse impact on the growth of our economies. Zambia has been negatively affected by climate change, which has led to poor crop yields as a result of adverse weather patterns. We have suffered energy deficits as a result of low water levels in our hydropower dams, which account for more than 98 per cent of our power production. We are therefore pursuing a greater energy mix through investment in alternative sources of energy, such as solar, wind and geothermal, among others.

I also wish to join other countries that are calling for the provision of adequate resources to make fully operational the Green Climate Fund, as that would greatly contribute to climate-change mitigation and adaptation. Zambia applauds the landmark Paris Agreement on Climate Change. It calls for fulfilment of the pledges made by parties at the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change .

Zambia also recognizes the importance of food security, and it therefore reaffirms its commitment to prioritizing a range of agricultural practices, including appropriate technologies that respond to climate change, such as conservation agriculture for sustainable and increased food production. Zambia supports calls for improved access to global and local agro-food markets, including transparent and open trading systems, as long as they do not negatively impact on local production. We therefore invite more investments in agro-processing industries to add value to our products and increase employment opportunities.

Zambia is making major strides in addressing various challenges in the health sector. We want to ensure easy access to health services by all our citizens. We are making steady progress in addressing communicable diseases such as HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. We are decentralizing primary health-care services and improving the financing mechanisms for major communicable diseases to strengthen the health systems.

At the regional level, the strengthening of the Southern African Development Community Strategy on Pooled Procurement of Essential Medicines and Health Commodities is among the positive interventions that are contributing to our improved health systems. Current interventions in relation to HIV and AIDS include the prevention of mother-to-child transmission and the treatment of all children who are HIV-positive. Our overall goal is to reach a zero-infection rate, in line with the global HIV and AIDS aspirations.

The Zambian Government has put in place policy measures to ensure that our people have access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including family planning. In addition, my Government has increased the number of health centres, in both rural and urban areas, where these services are accessed.

Zambia has made efforts to strengthen the legal framework for gender equity and equality by enacting the Gender Equity and Equality Act of 2015. That progressive law has put into effect domestically the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, and the Southern African Development Community Protocol on Gender and Development. At the continental level, in 2016 Zambia was among 11 countries presented with a gender award for the promotion of gender economic rights. In 2015, I was also humbled to receive the title of promoter of the He for She campaign from UN-Women in recognition of the role that Zambia has played in the area of women's empowerment.

This exemplifies the special attention and efforts that Zambia has continued to devote to issues related to the empowerment of women and young people in order to promote inclusive and sustainable growth. The measures that my Government has taken include promoting women's participation in commerce, trade and industry. In order to address some of the challenges that women face, we need support for the creation of lines of credit for women's empowerment programmes, skills development, employment creation, poverty reduction, and technical assistance in fostering environmentally friendly agricultural methods.

Africa needs strong institutions, not necessarily strong men. In that regard, Zambia is endeavouring to build a peaceful, just and inclusive society, particularly by consolidating democracy. The importance of democracy in our societies cannot be overemphasized. It is an extremely important aspect of our political systems that empowers people to freely participate in governance. As the Assembly is aware, Zambia held elections on 11 August, and they did indeed represent another opportunity for Zambia to demonstrate its commitment to upholding and promoting the tenets of democracy. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank the international community for supporting us during the process. Equally, I would like to thank the Zambian people for their peaceful conduct during the elections. I want to assure the Assembly that my Government will use its mandate to continue protecting our peaceful democratic legacy and meeting the aspirations of our people.

My Government yearns for a community of nations that recognizes and respects the sovereign equality of all nations, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. As States Members of the United Nations, we all have positive roles to play in promoting peace and security in order to attain sustainable development for present and future generations. However, Zambia is concerned about the fact that the world today continues to witness unbridled acts of conflict and terrorism and rising levels of poverty, which remain overarching and pressing challenges to our aspirations. We must therefore eradicate conflict if we are to attain the Sustainable Development Goals.

Zambia, as a member of the African Union Peace and Security Council, will dedicate its three-year term on that important decision-making body to promoting peace and security on the African continent. I therefore reiterate Zmbia's continued commitment to the ongoing efforts for peace and conflict resolution of the Southern African Development Community, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the African Union. We believe that the solution to African problems lies in Africa finding its own solutions. We nonetheless welcome and express our gratitude to the international community for its continued support to conflict resolution and peace processes on the continent.

While Zambia believes that the United Nations should be at the core of global governance and efforts to meet the challenges of collective peace, security and development, there is a pressing need to reform the Organization so that it can reflect the contemporary realities of today's global order. Zambia therefore fully supports the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, representing the African common position on reform of the Security Council. It is not right that Africa remains the only continent without permanent representation on the Security Council. That historical injustice must be corrected. We therefore urge Member States, including those that have vested interests in maintaining the status quo, to give due consideration to this legitimate demand from Africa. We all have an obligation to make the Security Council more representative, democratic and accountable if the Organization is going to demand democracy, representation and accountability from its Member States.

Zambia's belief in the ideals and role of the Security Council remains unshaken, and it is in that regard that I reiterate our steadfast commitment to continuing to contribute to the operations and well-being of the United Nations.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Zambia for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Juan Carlos Varela Rodríguez, President of the Republic of Panama

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Panama.

Mr. Juan Carlos Varela Rodríguez, President of the Republic of Panama, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Juan Carlos Varela Rodríguez, President of the Republic of Panama, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Varela Rodríguez (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the people of Panama, to whom I send a warm embrace from this rostrum, I am pleased to participate in the general debate of the General Assembly in order to share my thoughts on the progress and challenges that lie ahead for my country, the region and the world as they work to ensure peace, welfare and prosperity for our peoples.

I would like to begin by recognizing the Secretary-General for his outstanding work at the United Nations over the past 10 years, in which we have achieved historic agreements aimed at benefiting both present and future generations of humankind.

Panama is a country of dialogue and discussion, a multi-ethnic, multicultural, peace-loving nation, where people from all over the world who have found a new home on our land live and cooperate peacefully. Our motto — "Panama, bridge of the world, heart of the universe" — is growing ever stronger, and we are making progress under a Government committed to the democratic system, called to fulfil the role that stems from our geographical position.

Today I am pleased to inform the Assembly that on 26 June, we succeeded in completing the expansion of the Panama Canal, through which more than 120 New Panamax ships, capable of carrying cargoes three times larger than previously, have already travelled. The expansion, which was done mainly with Panamanian labour, has filled our nation with rightful pride and joy. With that major step, we Panamanians have fulfilled our commitment to continuing to bring the world closer together, facilitate global trade and put our country at the service of the international community. With the expansion finished, we are now preparing to move forward with studies that will enable us to increase the water-retention capacity of the Canal watershed in order to ensure a sufficient supply of drinking water to our major cities and uninterrupted operation of the inter-oceanic route. I would like to take this opportunity to invite the international community to visit our country and appreciate this masterpiece of engineering.

In Panama, we are working for political reform that gives democracy stability by making sure that it is always based on service to others. Thanks to the contributions of the expanded Canal, and of an honest Government committed to transparency and the efficient management of public funds, Panama is maintaining its economic growth and making rapid progress towards meeting the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Our Government's 2014-2019 strategic plan is aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and backed by an aggressive public investment plan, totalling $19 billion, designed to provide all Panamanians with access to potable water, basic sanitation, decent housing and efficient, high-quality health, education, security and transport services. With the aim of eradicating poverty and inequality, we have strengthened and expanded the coverage of our social support system programmes, which now reach 20 per cent of the population. In the area of public health, we have completed the first phase of our national dialogue for effective coordination of the health system. We have conducted mass vaccinations following an outbreak of the H1N1 virus in the region, and through our first national census on preventive health we have done free clinical evaluations of more than 80,000 people over the age of 40.

As a country, we are making the biggest investment in basic sanitation and mass transit in Latin America, areas that account for about 60 per cent of our budget for 2019. Together with our social housing and training programmes for young people at risk, those projects are transforming our neighbourhoods and communities with a new model for human development, with a

vision by the State taking into account social criteria and without partisan political distinctions. In the area of education, in a strategic alliance with the private sector, we are allocating the funds needed to develop an educational model with 100 per cent high school attendance, an extended school day and bilingual education, alongside the construction of new, modern higher technical education institutes that can enable our young people to get the well-paid jobs that our growing service economy is generating.

With the support of more than $3 billion in foreign investment in the energy sector, we are diversifying our energy mix with renewable, cleaner types of energy. We have set ourselves the goal of recovering 50 per cent of our deforested areas in the next 20 years and protecting our biodiversity and our oceans. By 2019, we will have built more than 300,000 basic sanitation units in Panamanian homes and housing projects for more than 100,000 families nationwide. We are building 10,000 new classrooms and renovating more than 3,000 public schools across the country. Right now we are making progress in adding another 50 kilometres to our mass transit metro system, which will benefit more than 1.5 million people. Our plan also includes long-term planning for the construction of new hospitals, roads, water treatment plants, aqueducts and sewage and wastewater treatment plants. All these efforts in public investments are being implemented with full fiscal responsibility, an added value of an honest and transparent Government.

In addition, we have developed a set of major reforms and exemplary actions aimed at strengthening our democracy and ensuring transparency and accountability within a framework of respect for the separation of powers and the rule of law. With every passing day, our country comes closer to meeting the SDGs. The range of world-class international services that form the basis of our growing economy makes us ever more committed to being responsible citizens of the world. As a serious, responsible country, Panama is willing to comply with the obligations of international law and to cooperate as a regional partner and strategic ally on trade and security issues.

With the same determination with which we committed to completing the expansion of the Canal and protecting our logistical services, ports and airports from organized crime, we in Panama have accepted responsibility for upholding our financial system and moving forward with the exchange of tax information. Our Administration has enacted important legal and institutional reforms so that we can adopt top international standards in order to comply with the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force on preventing and combating money laundering, terrorist financing and related activities. As I told the Assembly last year (see A/70/PV.19), some weeks ago we reaffirmed our commitment to transparent financial systems and fiscal responsibility with our announcement that Panama will become party to the Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and we are going to do that. We will continue to work with the international community to lead efforts to prevent financial systems from being used for purposes that do not represent the common good.

In addressing the serious threats and major challenges that are the purview of the Assembly, we must not forget that relations among States are global. Therefore we cannot allow differences of opinion among two or more countries on a single topic to jeopardize the progress that can be achieved on other bilateral and multilateral issues of common interest and mutual benefit to our peoples.

The world witnessed significant progress made at the Paris summit. This week, Panama will deposit the instrument of ratification of the Paris Agreement on climate change. Our country is moving aggressively to play its part. With the same resolve and commitment, I call on States Members of the Organization to join forces against climate change, pool their efforts and do everything in their power to find comprehensive solutions to the issue of irregular migration flows, and to continue taking solid steps that will allow us to defeat terrorism and organized crime, inequality and poverty.

In recent years, we have witnessed the intensification of terrorist attacks that threaten the peace and security of humankind on a recurring basis. I wish to recognize the men and women fighting terrorism and to express our solidarity with the families of those killed in these attacks. I thank those who are deployed on humanitarian missions around the world, assisting those who flee violence caused by terrorism and armed conflict.

Panama energetically condemns the recent attack perpetrated against a humanitarian aid convoy in Syria. I take this opportunity to call on the great Powers to maintain their diplomatic channels open and pursue

dialogue within the framework of the Security Council in order to achieve peace in Syria and the cessation of other armed conflicts in the world.

Yesterday, we Heads of State had the opportunity to discuss in depth the issue of irregular migration flows in our region, which in our case principally involves Haitian citizens who risk and even lose their lives crossing vast distances, rivers and inaccessible territories en route to northern countries in the hope of a better future. We stress our position that all migration policies and measures must be based on the protection of the inherent human right to life. Convinced that controlled migration contributes to justice and equity in the world, Panama therefore reaffirms its commitment to providing humanitarian treatment for migrants, applying strict health and safety controls. I call on all countries of the hemisphere to endorse the successful completion of the electoral process in Haiti and the strengthening of its democratic institutions and economy.

The rapprochement between the Governments of Cuba and the United States is an example of what diplomacy can achieve in order to contribute to the regulation of migration flows, and we expect this new dimension of the foreign policies of both countries to continue developing until the normalization of full diplomatic relations is achieved.

Panama supports the dialogue that is taking place in Venezuela. We believe that the inclusion of the Holy See as a mediator of the process would be very positive, and we reiterate our position that any end to tensions between the political forces of that brotherly nation must be achieved through democratic means and dialogue in order for social peace and respect for human rights to prevail.

On 26 September, we shall accompany the Government of Colombia in the signing of the Final Peace Agreement in that brotherly nation, which we commend and fully support. Our presence at that historic event will not be only to support the Agreement, but also to honour the memory of thousands of members of the Colombian public forces who have died and the thousands of innocent lives lost throughout the conflict.

We congratulate the Government of Colombia and President Juan Manuel Santos Calderón for his determination in the pursuit of peace, and we call on the demobilizing rebel groups to fulfil their obligations, as laid out in the Agreement, in order to consolidate a peace that is so desired and deserved by the Colombian nation. In this context, I acknowledge the Secretariat for its decision to become actively involved in supporting the peace process through to its successful completion.

Despite this great step forward, the region is threatened by increased drug production and trafficking. Panama will therefore continue to strengthen its capabilities and professionalize its public forces in order to protect our homeland and support the countries of our continent in the front-line fight against drug trafficking. During the 27 months of our Government, we have achieved a significant reduction in crime of more than 40 per cent after having launched a successful security plan to prevent and combat crime in Panama, offering more opportunities for young people at risk and a firm hand against delinquency and organized crime. In accordance with our security strategy, we have managed to seize tons of drugs and dismantle networks linked to organized crime.

In the first years of our Government, we reached out to the countries of Asia. With the support of Singapore, we are developing higher technical education in our country, and through the technical assistance and financing of the Government of Japan, Panama will build a 27-kilometer monorail that will benefit hundreds of thousands of Panamanians in the west of our capital city. With Europe, we increased our air connectivity with direct flights to five cities on that continent. With the United States, we have strengthened cooperation in security, and with the countries of our Latin American region we have adopted migration and trade policies that contribute to the development of economic relations and encourage integration.

Two months ago, the Holy See and His Holiness Pope Francis acknowledged our country's commitment to playing an active role in strengthening unity and peace in the world and guiding young people so that they may continue advancing along the path of education, work and progress. Panama has been chosen to host the next World Youth Day in 2019. This event will bring together more than 500,000 young people from 190 countries and will be a great opportunity to sow the seed of peace among young people in Central America, exchanging violence, mourning and pain for peace, faith and hope. This will promote and consolidate family values, security and the common good.

In the globalized world in which we live, threatened by armed conflict, terrorism, organized crime and

humanitarian crises, responsible countries represented in the Assembly must unite to confront these global threats and strengthen the United Nations system. Our canal has expanded, as have our ports and airports. In this way, Panama is each day more prepared to be the great connection. Yet what is most important for me as President is that the Government I lead should prepare us in such a way that this connection is more than merely logistical, and encompasses values and principles that strengthen governability in all nations and guarantee social peace in the world. My Government is committed to its country and to its people, and my nation is committed to placing its riches, capabilities and geographical position at the service of all the world's inhabitants. This is Panama — the route that unites the world.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Panama for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Juan Carlos Varela Rodríguez, President of the Republic of Panama, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera, President of the Republic of Costa Rica

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Costa Rica.

Mr. Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera, President of the Republic of Costa Rica, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera, President of the Republic of Costa Rica, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Solís Rivera (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica congratulates Mr. Thomson on his election as leader of the General Assembly and welcomes the priorities that he has set for his term of office. The President can count on our full support for their implementation. Costa Rica also thanks the Secretary-General for his leadership and, in particular, his contribution to the cause of peace and sustainable development.

We are coming to the end of 2016, having achieved little progress in addressing the crisis of refugees and migrants — the worst such crisis since the Second World War. Costa Rica reiterates the urgency of providing assistance and the need to ensure the protection of and respect for the human rights of people who have been forced to leave their homes in search of safe havens for themselves and their families, as a result of armed conflict, violence, natural disasters or the effects of climate change that threaten their access to the most basic means of survival. We are failing to fulfil our commitment to leave no one behind.

Mass media and the international community have paid little attention to the tragedy of thousands of migrants travelling through Latin America from south to north. For Costa Rica, from April to September alone 9,487 irregular migrants have crossed our borders, and we have granted refugee status to a total of 215 people during the first half of 2016 alone. Our country has been a crossroads for thousands of migrants: Cubans, Haitians, Central Americans, Asians and Africans.

Clearly, the problem is global and requires joint solutions, solidarity, shared responsibility and comprehensive approaches. With regard to migration and refugee crises, we must not consider only large movements, as these only deal with very specific experiences, and leave out any discussion on the constant flow of migration throughout the rest of the world. Such movement takes place outside of the confines of the law. It is a phenomenon that is fuelled by inequality, poverty and structural causes resulting from conflict and is fostered by the activities of international organized crime networks.

As a country of origin, transit and destination for migrants, Costa Rica has criminalized their trafficking under the law against trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants adopted in 2012. That legal framework also guides the design and implementation of our national policy to address the crime of migrant smuggling from a gender perspective. The policy is based on the care and protection of victims, prevention, law enforcement, information gathering, analysis and research, and institutional coordination.

In our experience, faced with flows of migrants and the need for humanitarian aid, we must highlight the ongoing role played by civil society organizations as a support network for migrants and their families on the move, in addition to their enormous capacity to document the situation on the ground and see to and deal with violations of human rights of smuggled migrants.

Communities that have welcomed these migrants have shown their profound solidarity with those in need.

The complex situation concerning the wave of migrants will only be exacerbated by the effects of climate change. Floods, droughts and the rise in sea level will force people to pick up and move within their country and abroad.

Such challenges call on us to virtuously manage the entire ecosystem of human mobility through a dialogue on processes, actors, mechanisms and organizations. Resources must be efficiently used, and there must be better coordination between humanitarian and development actors. That does not mean that development resources must be redirected to humanitarian assistance. That would create a vicious circle, thereby neglecting investment in the root causes of such movements.

We will not tire of repeating and insisting on the need to address the specific impacts that migration has on women and the need to adapt public policies to address those particularities. We will continue to raise our voice to call for action to combat gender-based and sexual violence.

If we are feigning loyalty to laws and institutions, we had better stop. If we believe that humankind can survive by remaining on this path and adhering to pretences as usual, we will only be selfishly and short-sightedly digging our own grave. We should remember that it is not because of mere altruism but the starkest realities that we have chosen to abide by a global order, subject to institutions and universal principles of self-regulation. The escalation of tensions, conflicts and the use of force suit no one but a few merchants of suffering and death. The national interest of all States is to strengthen the international system and the United Nations, which is at the centre of that effort.

The philosopher and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Albert Schweitzer said,

> "To the question whether I am a pessimist or an optimist, I answer that my knowledge is pessimistic, but my willing and hoping are optimistic".

Today there are realities and actions that fill me with optimism because change is taking place in the world. I wish to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his invitation to be co-facilitator, along with my colleague Simona Scarpaleggia, Chief Executive Officer of IKEA Switzerland, of the High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment. The hard work of the Panel has already resulted constructively in a preliminary report. I want to share several of its conclusions with the Assembly.

Simona Scarpaleggia said at the Panel,

> "I firmly believe that there is huge potential that could be unlocked simply by valuing and empowering women. The energy, the power and creativity of women are badly needed — not only to make this world a better place, but to enable it to survive in the years to come."

The lessons are many, but first it is necessary to recall some facts, some of which might seem obvious and others that might surprise. The vast majority of women in the world work. They work in the informal, public and private sectors as business women, domestic workers, and unremunerated workers. But women have half as many possibilities as men in securing full-time paid work. It is estimated that there are 1.27 billion women worldwide in paid jobs compared with 2 billion men. We are talking about a difference of more than 700 million women who do not have the same opportunities as men. Women undertake unpaid work three times as often as men and handle most of the caregiving work. The deep and unfortunate impact of this situation is reflected in the fact that it is estimated that the value of unpaid care work is equivalent to $10 billion, or 13 per cent of world gross domestic product.

The Sustainable Development Goals are interconnected and interdependent. The Panel emphasized the multiple relationships that exist between the targets set out in Goal 5, on gender equality and the empowerment of women, and Goal 8, to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all, men and women alike. The relationship between this debate and Goal 10 is clear: the goal is to reduce inequality within and among countries. I am convinced that the economic empowerment of women should be viewed not only as a goal in itself but as a means for the implementation of the other targets and Goals set out in the 2030 Agenda.

The Panel proposes seven principles and seven guiding actions. As basic principles, we assume that no woman should be left behind and that nothing should be done for women without the participation of women, and that we should focus equally on rights and profits. Empowerment is not only the right thing to do; it is the intelligent road map towards human development,

growth and business promotion. We must also address the root causes of economic gender inequality based on gender inequalities in society, respect internationally agreed standards, and, finally, recognize the need to work in partnerships, with global compliance in all countries.

To achieve the global empowerment of women, the Panel recommends the following measures.

First, we must end stereotypes and transform and challenge the rules that limit women's access to work or devalue their work. Changing those rules must be a priority in order to expand women's economic opportunities within the framework of the 2030 Agenda.

We must level the playing field for women, guarantee employment and social protection, and reform discriminatory laws and regulations. A total of 155 countries worldwide have at least one law that prevents women from becoming involved in economic activities. This must be changed; it would contribute greatly to economic growth, and it is a simple step that all Governments can take.

Finally, as a social co-responsibility, we must invest in care, recognizing, reducing and redistributing unpaid work in this field. We must ensure decent working conditions for domestic workers. One of the first steps to achieve this is to ratify International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 189. I urge those countries that have not yet done so to take that step.

We must guarantee the an adequate distribution of digital, financial and physical goods. This is also important. We need Governments, the private sector and civil society to take action so as to ensure that trends and innovations in digital technologies and finance, as well as legal reforms in the field of tenancy and land ownership, expand women's opportunities.

We must change our culture and the way we do business in order to create opportunities for women. As a minimum, businesses should follow ILO conventions along with national legislation regarding gender equality in order to eliminate discriminatory practices.

We must create opportunities, with Governments improving practices in the public sector both as an employer and as a supplier of goods and services. We must establish, implement and promote public policies that benefit women living in poverty and vulnerability as well as macroeconomic policies that guarantee their rights and generate sustainable and inclusive work.

Women's voices must be heard, encouraging a greater participation in leadership and business and political decision-making posts. In order to translate such measures into reality, it is imperative that we improve data collection relating to the economic empowerment of women. The ILO, along with many other United Nations agencies, development banks and various countries and organizations, has been making considerable efforts to create new methodologies and measurements with respect to the widest variety of variables pertaining to the economic empowerment of women.

The Heads of State and Government who are listening today should know that the most important aspect of the work of the Panel, which is scheduled to issue a second report next year, relates to everything that we are able to accomplish in our own countries as a result of its findings, good practices, principles and recommendations. We invite those States capable of implementing the Panel's recommendations to do so and to become laboratories instrumental in their implementation. A call to action is imperative. There must be greater commitment on the part of all to achieve this objective.

We know that the world has many crises to deal with, but we can and must promote and ensure changes that will transform the lives of millions of women and girls. This is an imperative call to action. I am certain that this will benefit not only women, but also our societies at large. This is a step we must take in order to achieve equality in other aspects of relationships between men and women. This is the best path for our planet; together, humankind can effectively adopt new models of sustainable development that allow us to survive as a species.

It fills us with immense pride that the Paris Agreement negotiations were led by a Costa Rican woman, Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change until early July, a woman with immense diplomatic capabilities who showed us that when we work together, with commitment and a focus on the common good, we can restore hope and work towards a better world.

The Paris Agreement must enter into force immediately, and we have an obligation to increase our ambitions with time. That is why Costa Rica has made every effort to complete its domestic approval

process and will soon join the list of countries that have ratified it.

We therefore aspire to become a laboratory for the deep decarbonization of the world economy and a green hub for management, innovation and the transfer of knowledge, with early action built upon existing achievements. With our planned nationally determined contribution, we will work to achieve our national aspiration to steer the economy towards carbon neutrality by 2021, as part and parcel of pre-2020 voluntary actions, and we have strengthened our long-term commitment to the deep decarbonization of the economy. The compensatory effects of our forests are accompanied by emissions reductions in critical sectors such as transport, livestock and waste. We have set an absolute emissions limit for 2030, which is equivalent to a 25 per cent reduction in emissions compared with 2012.

Our aspirations also include the promotion of our social inclusion and development policies so that our focus can go beyond the traditional silo-based approach. We are moving towards an integral development model based on multidimensional benchmarks that go far beyond the entry requirement. For that reason, on 9 September the heads of the three State branches and representatives of local governments, the private sector, social and religious organizations and academia gathered to sign the national pact to meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

Our planet needs our care, and this care must be all-encompassing. Costa Rica is fully committed to processes that, within the framework of the United Nations, seek to protect oceans and marine resources, in particular through the elaboration of a new international agreement for the protection of the more than 60 per cent of marine biodiversity that is located in international areas, in keeping with Goal 14 of the 2030 Agenda.

Costa Rica continues to be deeply shocked by the terrorist attacks that, unfortunately, as we know, occur somewhere in the world practically every week of the year. We would like once again to express our absolute, unequivocal condemnation of terrorism in every all its forms and manifestations, no matter who commits it or where it happens or with whatever goal in mind, as well as to stress the need to bring to justice those who commit such acts.

The fight against terrorism must be framed in strict observance of international law, including human rights law, international humanitarian law and the international law on refugees. In that context, we think that this is the right time to make a respectful request to countries that have not yet done so to ratify the Arms Trade Treaty without further delay. The diversion of arms to extremist groups could be substantially reduced if more States were to implement the provisions set forth in that multilateral, legally binding instrument.

Costa Rica has followed with concern the constant launches of missiles and the carrying out of nuclear exercises by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the most recent one being on 9 September. In addition to voicing our strongest condemnation and rejection of such actions, which represent a serious threat to peace, stability and regional and international security, we must demand that North Korea cease such punishable acts, which unequivocally violate relevant resolutions of the Security Council, including the most recent one on the subject, resolution 2270 (2016).

Costa Rica also wishes to stress the importance of fighting impunity for criminal atrocities. Prosecution for such crimes must be promoted comprehensively and at the highest level. Costa Rica welcomes the initiatives aimed at promoting a code of conduct restricting the use of the veto in the Security Council in cases of outrageous crimes. Costa Rica reiterates its call to Member States to adopt the code of conduct put forth by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group.

Likewise, Costa Rica welcomes the efforts oriented towards the full establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States of America and Cuba, as well as the measures announced by the senior authorities of those two friendly countries concerning political dialogue and openness. In that spirit, we reiterate our support for the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba in accordance with the systematic, almost unanimous, demands of the international community to that end.

Costa Rica welcomes the signing of the peace agreements in Colombia and the ceasefire declaration of last August. Not only does that bring an end to the oldest armed conflict in the region, but it also contributes to wholly converting Latin America and the Caribbean into a region of peace. We trust that the agreement will allow the Government and our Colombian brothers

and sisters to plan their future development along a peaceful path.

We would like to stress that it is the General Assembly that has the power to define the term of office of the next Secretary-General through the appointment resolution. We will continue to advocate that the term be a single period of seven years without the possibility of re-election, as we are convinced that that would facilitate the exercise of leadership free from the coordination required to set in motion a selection process designed to secure a second term. It is fundamental to Costa Rica that there be a democratization of the selection process for the Secretary-General. Therefore, the Security Council's endorsement of more than one candidate increases the inclusiveness, transparency and, most important, the legitimacy of the process by requiring a vote.

We have advocated, and will continue to advocate, that a woman should occupy the position of Secretary-General for the first time in history. We have reached a new milestone in history by having six extraordinary women, including a Costa Rican, as candidates for the position of Secretary-General. The transformation demanded by people all over the world requires new sensibilities and forms of exercising leadership.

My goal is that my daughter Inés, who is 10 years old now, will be able to tell her descendants of a strange former era, when women did not earn as much as men for the same work, when they were not equal owners of the means of production, when the care of children was a chore largely reserved for women and when their sexual and reproductive rights were not safeguarded. That strange era is the one that we must leave behind, in the same way that we slowly leave behind other scourges such as slavery, discrimination in any of its many forms, and consumption and wars as the basis for our economy, which are destroying our shared home, Mother Earth.

We can overcome hate, violence and inequality. We can achieve peace. We can trace the path to development and human progress. We just need to believe that it is possible, and that making it happen is in our hands.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Costa Rica for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera, President of the Republic of Costa Rica, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by His Excellency Mr. Tsakhia Elbegdorj, President of Mongolia

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of Mongolia.

Mr. Tsakhia Elbegdorj, President of Mongolia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Tsakhia Elbegdorj, President of Mongolia, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Elbegdorj: At the outset, I wish to join others in extending our heartfelt congratulations to the President on his election as President of the General Assembly at its seventy-first session. Mongolia pledges its full support to the President.

It is my great honour to address this body for the seventh time on behalf of the Mongolian people. I am the youngest of eight sons. For generations, my family lived as nomadic herdsmen in the western highlands of my country. My mother and father never dreamed that, one day, their youngest son would be speaking from this respected rostrum to the largest assembly in the world.

I am proud to serve for my country in accordance with the free will of our people. Mongolia is governed by democratic rules. The President has a constitutional term limit. Therefore, my mandate ends next year. This is my last address as the President of Mongolia to the General Assembly.

But the people of Mongolia will continue to be citizens of the global community together with all nations. I am proud that my country is a good friend and partner of every State Member of the United Nations. I am confident that our next President will be welcomed by everyone here and will be given the same respect and the same spirit of cooperation that I have enjoyed during these years.

Achieving sustainable development is essential. It is essential because no one in the world should be left behind and be deprived of the right to development. We must work together towards a world where everybody

can have a dignified life, free from poverty, violence and depression. I firmly believe that justice, stability and security cannot be ensured without the rule of law and respect for the fundamental rights and freedoms of all. Those basic principles must be respected and protected in every country and by all Governments.

The United Nations celebrated its seventieth anniversary at a time of turbulence. Today, we are witnessing many conflicts and terrorist attacks, which have become almost daily news headlines. The world is facing its largest-ever humanitarian crisis, involving millions of people who have been displaced from their homes. The slowdown in global growth and the rising tensions in many places have threatened further progress.

However, the intervening year has been a period of inspiring collaboration as well. In some places, long-fought wars have come to an end. Peace agreements have been reached. The development of dangerous weapons has been restrained. The power of diplomacy has prevailed. Last year, all together, we launched the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes a plan of action for people, the planet and prosperity. In December in Paris, the world turned a new page in its efforts to combat climate change.

As a global community, we are all following a new road map on our next 15-year journey. The 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement provide clear guidelines for achieving what we have promised to do. We must now act together as we take responsibility for our people. We must now strengthen our partnership so as to save the planet. We now need the resources to put the action plan to work.

Mongolia will ensure that no one is left behind by reaching out first to the most vulnerable. The principles and policies of the 2030 Agenda have been translated into our national strategy. The Mongolia 2030 Sustainable Development Vision of is under way. Our agenda calls for the establishment of a diverse and inclusive economic structure aimed at increasing decent jobs, providing opportunities and generating income. Our goal is to improve the quality of life and ensure environmental sustainability. Equally essential is cooperation between and among Governments, international development communities, the private sector and civil-society institutions.

From our past experience in implementing the Millennium Development Goals at the national level, we learned that regular follow-up and review mechanisms will be essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Therefore, accountability and the quality of governance will eventually define the success of the SDGs.

Tomorrow, we will mark that landmark achievement on our collective journey to counter climate change. Let me take this opportunity to congratulate the States parties that have formally ratified the Paris Agreement. The people of Mongolia have joined the world in its fight to mitigate climate change. We have concluded our national legislative process and recently ratified the Paris Agreement. The Paris Agreement represents our common success, the result of our hard work. It is also a great inspiration for all of us. It is our bold vision and promise to our children to save the world for them. And we must deliver on that promise.

Mongolia is one of smallest carbon emitters in the world, yet it suffers disproportionately from climate change. Desertification, deforestation and the loss of biodiversity have severely affected livelihoods in our traditional nomadic culture, and they spur further environmental degradation.

Mongolia is holding up its end of the bargain. But the promised international cooperation and support are still lacking. The benefits of the green funds and carbon credits are sorely missed in Mongolia and many developed countries alike. We urge multilateral institutions to take the lead in those important efforts. We have one home, one world for all of us and one universal goal, namely, to save our home. Today is our time to act. We must not miss that chance, as we must not miss our future.

To that end we must work for equality, inclusiveness and accountability in our Governments and societies. Our agreed Agenda calls for inclusive societies and accountable institutions. People have called for good governance and the rule of law through the 2030 Agenda. They have asked for transparency and accountability in Governments' plans and development efforts. We must be accountable in our actions and responsibilities. Accountability is a benchmark requirement for good governance. Good governance is key to global peace and prosperity. We therefore promote accountability and good governance in our society. A national law on public hearings and a policy on supporting public participation are being implemented in Mongolia.

The Agenda for Sustainable Development demands action against corruption. It requires that institutions function in a transparent and efficient way, based on the rule of law. Basic services must therefore be delivered without discrimination or corruption. Investors can count on stability and businesses on predictability, with clear legal frameworks, decent jobs and recourse to independent courts. It means that natural resources are harnessed to benefit the many, not the few, and the environmental impact is measured and controlled.

Development and accountability are about democracy. We should never take democracy for granted. Neither should we worship it. It must be nurtured and strengthened on a daily basis. It is our way of living and our state of mind. A democratic society is sustainable because its aim is the highest development of every one of its members.

Therefore, our common goal as leaders should be to provide an environment where democratic institutions can thrive — the rule of law, human rights, democratic governance and free and fair elections. And we must enforce accountability. The people will do the rest in a democracy. For only in a democracy will each and every person be provided with opportunities for self-development and self-realization.

Over the past 26 years, Mongolia has accumulated experience as a stable and peaceful democracy. It was tested again in the most recent parliamentary elections, held on 29 June. The elections were open and transparent. The newly formed Parliament and Cabinet are now responsible for the people of Mongolia. The people vested them with full power to work hard for them.

Over the past two decades, Mongolia has been supporting and promoting stronger democratic institutions and sustainable, effective and legitimate democracy. We have been sharing our experiences and lessons learned with our fellow nations. We have been happy to learn that our lessons have helped other countries.

From this podium, I wish to sincerely congratulate the people of both Kyrgyzstan and Myanmar for their successful elections held last year and to wish them sustained prosperity.

As one of the Chairs of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), Mongolia hosted the IDEA Annual Democracy Forum last month. At this year's Forum, the focus was on learning from democratic transitions. Experts from many countries with various democracy models shared their experiences relating to improving the modalities of elections, accountability and transparency. It was truly a knowledge-sharing and inspiring exercise. Mongolia's International Cooperation Fund, to which we are committed, will expand its activities to work together with emerging democracies.

Mongolia holds dear human rights and liberties. These days we talk all too often about human rights and the rule of law. Whether we uphold such values is tested by actual practice and implementation. The entire 2030 Agenda is centred on respect for human rights and human dignity. We, the Member States, have the primary responsibility for upholding human rights. In order to assume its responsibilities, Mongolia has started a new phase of legal reform aimed at ensuring the full protection of human rights, including the right to justice.

Mongolia has abolished the death penalty. I believe that the death penalty is neither acceptable nor justifiable under any circumstances. I believe that one day our loving human family will become free of the death penalty. I know it is not easy to exercise leadership on that tough issue. Nevertheless, as a democratic society in the East, Mongolia will spare no effort to promote human rights and human dignity.

As a member of the Human Rights Council, Mongolia will work against any form of discrimination. Ten years ago, we, the Member States, created the Human Rights Council to put the human rights pillar back at the centre of the United Nations system. It was created to provide a space for open dialogue so as to respond to human rights emergencies. As we know all too well, human rights are, sadly, threatened around the world. Many countries fail to uphold human rights while countering terrorism. The Human Rights Council must act effectively to create a global culture based on respect for human rights and dignity for all.

The spread of terrorism all over the world is a grave concern for us. Terrorism is a common challenge for all of humankind. It is a common threat to national security, as well as to the global order. We all witness, almost every day, humanitarian disasters and massive human rights violations. Mongolia firmly opposes all forms of terrorism and violence. There is no justification for terrorism of any kind. The international community

must be united to defeat and counter terrorism. At the same time, we should also do all we can to prevent that form of violent extremism.

In July this year, Mongolia successfully hosted the eleventh Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Summit to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of that forum. I take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Heads of State and Government and leaders of the ASEM partner organizations for attending the Summit and contributing to its success. I am proud to report to the General Assembly that the leaders of Asia and Europe came together to chart out the future course of action for the next decade. We reaffirmed our strong determination to take joint actions to consolidate peace, security and stability. Asia and Europe stand united in our actions against terrorism, corruption and poverty. I firmly believe that ASEM multilateralism will advance global well-being and prosperity. Once again, I thank representatives for visiting my homeland for a once-in-a-century event of global magnitude.

In the Ulaanbaatar Declaration, the leaders of Asia and Europe sent strong messages to the people of the world about how we will work together during the next decade. We are united in contributing to sustained peace, security, stability and economic recovery and in responding to global and regional challenges in the twenty-first century. We all agreed on the key role that the United Nations should play in maintaining international peace and security.

It has always been a profound delight for me, as the Head of State of Mongolia, to report to the General Assembly on the successful service of Mongolian sons and daughters as Blue Helmets, who stand guard for global peace and stability. The United Nations is doing its utmost to protect civilians, end conflicts and create conditions for lasting peace. The security environment is far more complex and more dangerous than ever, and the services of United Nations peacekeepers have never been as much in demand as now.

The world is not yet free of wars, devastation and destitution, but we believe that there will come a day when child refugees will no longer be swept onto the shore by cold ocean tides, when children will no longer be orphaned in senseless violence and wars and when people will no longer be afraid to take peaceful strolls in the beautiful cities of Nice, Istanbul or Dhaka.

South Sudan is still the youngest member of the international community. The people of South Sudan need our help and support, and we are proud that Mongolian peacekeepers, together with fellow Blue Helmets, continue to extend their helping hand to the people of South Sudan. We honour their bravery and dedication. I would like to take this opportunity to express my profound appreciation to the thousands of courageous members of international humanitarian organizations. They put their very lives at risk while saving millions from certain death and starvation. Once again, I congratulate them.

The demand for mediation and support and good offices for humanitarian assistance has reached an all-time high. Conflict situations must be resolved. My own region, North-East Asia, is home to many unresolved issues. The last stronghold and division of the Cold War still persists on the Korean peninsula. Any development there will have a direct impact on regional and our own security and stability. Once again, we reiterate our firm position that the Korean peninsula should be nuclear-weapon-free.

In order to resolve tensions and conflicts, it is crucial to eradicate mistrust among the nations concerned and to hold direct talks more often. The Ulaanbaatar Dialogue on Northeast Asian Security is called upon to do exactly that: to promote trust in the region, to facilitate the exchange of ideas and to find solutions to common concerns. The task is complicated and not easy. However, every Member of the United Nations will strive for an appropriate solution.

In conclusion, allow me to express Mongolia's full commitment to faithfully implementing both the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. We must demonstrate to the world and to our nations that meaningful progress is being made on all 17 Sustainable Development Goals. We reaffirm our firm commitment to the multilateral system with the United Nations at its core. Let us therefore work together for the progress on global development for future generations. As always, Mongolia will play its part for the cause of peace, freedom and justice.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of Mongolia for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Tsakhia Elbegdorj, President of Mongolia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Senegal.

Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Sall (*spoke in French*): The delegation of Senegal wishes to thank the former President of the General Assembly for his efforts during the previous session and wishes the current President every success in the carrying out of his mandate.

We are gathered here once again to breathe new life into the founding principles of the United Nations, to promote peace and progress and to cultivate the spirit of tolerance and mutual understanding among peoples. Nevertheless, the world has never been so violent or dangerous as it is now, as innocent people, whose only mistake was to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, are being killed without reason, leaving entire families plunged into grief and mourning. No cause, certainly no religious cause, can justify violence. The height of cowardice is attacks against priests and imams, including at religious sites.

Senegal — a land of cultural and religious diversity, where the Muslim 95 per cent of the population live in harmony with their Christian fellow countrymen and people of other traditional religions — firmly condemns and rejects violence in all of its forms and manifestations. By the same token, we reject facile and unjust assignments of blame. Neither Islam nor Muslims are to blame for what we are witnessing. We refuse to have the senseless acts of a faithless, lawless minority be used as a pretext for stigmatizing more than 1 billion Muslims and their religion. When imams are killed and mosques are attacked, including acred Islamic sites, it is Muslims whose faith and very core are being attacked. We must therefore not condemn Muslims for actions of which they themselves are the victims. It is high time to cease the madness and Islamophobic slurs.

Senegal is concerned every time measures target Muslim countries and communities, in violation of human rights and the rules that govern international relations. To lapse into senseless Islamophobia only compounds suffering with more suffering. It stokes antagonism and exacerbates the clash of civilizations, which plays into the hands of extremists of all stripes. Given the global terrorist threat affecting us all, good sense dictates the need to cooperate to vanquish evil with a global, united and concerted response.

The values that bring us together and make each of our peoples feel like part of the United Nations family derive from the fact that all civilizations and cultures are equal in dignity. Therefore, since we are the United Nations, let us apply the same commitment and diligence to tackling all of the challenges we face, from Syria to Libya, from South Sudan to Somalia, from Northern Mali to countries plagued by the criminal activities of the Boko Haram terrorist group. Let us give the same priority to all threats to international peace and security.

Let us finally work to arrive at a fair solution to the protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict, one which upholds the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to a State living side by side with Israel in peace, each within secure and internationally recognized borders. Let us extend the same respect and humanity to all migrants, refugees and displaced persons, regardless of their origin.

Let us finally rectify the historical injustice of a Security Council without a permanent seat for Africa, the only continent in that situation. I would recall in that connection that Africa accounts for nearly one third of United Nations Members, and that issues involving Africa form the bulk of the work of the Security Council. Senegal will continue its mandate in the Security Council. We remain wedded to the African position, as set forth in the Ezulwini Consensus. We remain open to dialogue with those whose opinions differ from ours.

Last year, we adopted the Agenda for Sustainable Development for the period up until 2030, and we adopted the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. With the theme of this session, which calls for a universal effort to transform our world, we have a fresh opportunity to translate our commitments into action. For African countries, the issue of energy remains a vital challenge, because there can be neither industrialization nor development without access to electricity at competitive costs. Africa cannot continue

to enlighten other continents with its resources, while it itself remains in the dark. Africa cannot continue to serve as a reservoir for raw materials, processed elsewhere to the detriment of its own industrialization. Africa cannot remain the continent that is most affected by climate change, even though our contribution to carbon dioxide emissions related to electricity is at the lowest level, expected to reach only 3 per cent in 2040.

The Paris Agreement, which we signed in April, compels us to work together and calls for developing countries, especially in Africa, not to adopt the same polluting patterns as industrialized countries. To that end, the African Union last July launched a support fund to provide electricity to Africa. The fund is housed at the African Development Bank, and its aim is to mobilize financing for electricity projects as part of an energy mix. On behalf of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, the steering committee of which Senegal chairs, I commend the support of France and Germany for that initiative. I invite all bilateral and multilateral partners to contribute to the financing of the fund for providing energy to Africa, in line with the commitments made under the Paris Agreement to finance mitigation and adaptation measures.

Furthermore, I call for a different view of development challenges in Africa. Let us set aside the clichés of a bygone past. Let us not look at Africa as a land of humanitarian emergencies and a receptacle for official development assistance, but rather as a continent that is being built, a centre for development and progress. Africa is a continent of roads and highways, of bridges and railways, of dams and power plants, of industrial zones and modern agricultural farms. That is our ambition for our countries. We cannot achieve that ambition through assistance, only through large-scale urgent investments in sectors that generate growth and development. We wish to depend mainly on the mobilization of our own resources through more effective public spending, greater and fairer remuneration for our raw materials, regulated taxation and a more robust struggle against illicit financial flows.

In that connection, Senegal supports the plan to combat tax-base erosion and profit-shifting, which was initiated by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Group of 20, with support from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. At the same time, I would call for the immediate implementation of the "Strengthening assistance for complex contract negotiations" initiative of the Group of Seven, especially in the area of mines and hydrocarbons. We wish to see fair and balanced contracts that protect both the interests of the investor and the rights of the host country.

Finally, I would call upon all public and private partners not to overestimate the investment risks in Africa. Africa has achieved significant progress in terms of good governance and improvements in the business climate. The risk there is not greater than elsewhere, and clearly, for a global economy that is currently suffering, Africa does not pose risks. Rather, the continent affords opportunities for recovery and shared growth. Let us work to reform global financing so as to alleviate the conditions limiting access to credit for development financing.

By drawing upon our faith in a new Africa, for two years we have continued to implement the Emerging Senegal Plan through major infrastructure projects, notably central electric-power plants, a new urban centre, transportation infrastructure, including a second toll road, and the forthcoming launch of a regional express train line linking Dakar to our new international airport, soon to be finished.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for all his efforts and service to the United Nations in this difficult time.

I also wish to pay tribute to President Barak Obama of the United States for his contribution to the international agenda over the course of his two presidential terms. The path taken by President Obama through the decision of the American people is a historic message, a universal message, a message inviting every person to overcome the shadows of their own prejudice to embrace the light of wisdom. It is a message of humanity that is reminiscent of the eloquent words delivered by the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. 53 years ago in front of the Lincoln Memorial, that people "will not be judged by the colour of their skin, but by the content of their character".

What holds true for humankind also holds true for nations. There are no large and small nations; there are united nations. And since we are the United Nations, all voices must count when we deliberate on our common issues. I wish the General Assembly every success in its work.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Senegal for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Agenda item 8 (*continued*)

General debate

Address by Mr. John Key, Prime Minister of New Zealand

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of New Zealand.

Mr. John Key, Prime Minister of New Zealand, was escorted to the rostrum.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. John Key, Prime Minister of New Zealand, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. Key (New Zealand): It is special pleasure to speak to the General Assembly under the presidency of a Pacific island friend.

The world is facing serious challenges. Borders are closing to people and products, and to investment and ideas. Many States are turning inwards. The politics of fear and extremism are gaining ground. Too many States are flouting the rules. But no country can face today's challenges alone. Now more than ever, we need to show that we are united in our respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. They are the basic principles that underpin our global system, born from the bitter experience of war, and they are as relevant today as they were in 1945.

My country, New Zealand, is a proudly independent, multicultural trading nation in the Asia-Pacific region. The international system matters to us. We are committed to being a good global citizen and to playing our part. We rise on the fortunes of all Member States. We believe that it is in all our interests to be open and outward-facing, to work through our differences, to have rules and, most of all, to play by them. Now is the time to reinforce the relevance and standing of the United Nations in our response to today's challenges.

There are many areas where the United Nations could be more efficient, more representative, more responsive and show greater leadership. It is our collective responsibility as Member States to face up to the political commitment necessary to make the United Nations the body that we want it to be.

For the past two years, our focus has been on the Security Council. We are using our term on the Council to raise the tough issues, because we believe that that is what the Council is for and what our supporters expect us to do. New Zealand is working for a Security Council that shows more leadership on the toughest political issues, that works harder to get the incentives right so as to broker solutions and that is better at responding to political crises before they spiral out of control.

The Council has put its weight behind many successes, from the adoption of the Iran deal to ending the long-running war in Colombia. But the Council also has shortcomings that, if not addressed, risk undermining its relevance and standing in world affairs. For the vast majority of Member States, which are dependent on a fair, rules-based international system, a weak Council is not an option. We acknowledge that the Council does not have a role in every crisis. But the reality is that we need the Council to respond when no one else can. That is why we have consistently called for Council action to revive the Middle East peace process.

We have also been deeply troubled to see the Council, the pre-eminent body for international peace and security, fail to live up to its responsibilities on the most serious crisis of our time — Syria. There the Council has fallen short. The internal politics within the Council and the sheer complexity of the Syrian crisis have obstructed a unified Council response. But we believe that no matter how difficult and sensitive the issues, the Council cannot watch the situation go from bad to worse for the Syrian people. The Security Council was established to address crises such as that which we see in Syria. That is why New Zealand is using our presidency of the Council to convene a leaders' level meeting tomorrow on Syria.

A meeting by itself will not stop the conflict. But after more than five years of brutal fighting and horrific humanitarian suffering, we do not think that it is credible for leaders to come to New York and not address the stark realities driving the conflict. We hope that tomorrow's meeting will provide an opportunity for Council leaders to take stock of developments, examine

the fundamental issues at the heart of the conflict and discuss how we can move towards a sustainable political solution.

We also hope that the meeting will be a chance for the Council to put its weight behind the ceasefire agreement reached between the United States and Russia. That agreement is the best chance we have had in some time to stop the fighting, get aid to those who need it and get back on track for a political resolution to the crisis.

Another critical issue on which New Zealand supports unified Council action is the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. New Zealand believes that a strong international response is required to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear test on 9 September and its recent missile tests. The regime's efforts to advance its nuclear and missile programmes, its callous disregard for the North Korean people, as demonstrated by the human rights situation in the country, and its leader's unpredictably ruthless rule have made it one of our most pressing international security threats. Its provocative actions show blatant disregard for Security Council resolutions and pose a grave threat to international law. They have raised tensions on the Korean peninsula to a point where the risk of conflict is dangerously high. We cannot afford further escalation.

New Zealand therefore welcomes recent steps by the United States and China to begin negotiating a new Security Council resolution, following the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's recent nuclear test. We hope that this will send a clear signal to the North Korean leadership that continued provocative and dangerous actions are unacceptable and that a return to the negotiating table represents the only sensible way forward. The international community must stand together in conveying these messages, including through fully implementing Security Council sanctions.

The Council has impact and influence when it is unified, but we have to get better at identifying incentives that encourage unified Council positions. For a country with a proud tradition of being a pragmatic bridge-builder and problem-solver, the Council can be an incredibly frustrating place to work. But we are committed to trying to make it work because it is in our collective interest to have a strong and relevant Council.

We all need to make an investment in keeping it on track where it is needed most: in preventing and stopping conflict. That means coming to the Council ready to find a way to get beyond vested political interests and being prepared to work on compromise solutions that stop the fighting.

The veto plays a huge part in the Council's effectiveness. No matter how hard we work to find compromises, time and time again we come up against the veto. The use of the veto, the threat of the veto, the exploitation of the veto is well beyond what the founders of the United Nations ever envisaged.

We acknowledge that addressing regional and national interests is a fundamental part of the process of finding durable solutions. But increasingly the Charter is being ignored and the Council seen as irrelevant as countries put pursuit of their national interests before almost anything else. The time for moving forward on Security Council reform is now. We will be pushing more than ever for action in the General Assembly to make the Council better reflect today's realities and needs.

New Zealand is also working to make the Council more effective in conflict prevention. We want to make the Council better at responding to political crises before they spiral out of control. There is no lack of mandate for conflict prevention. It is in the Charter. There is no lack of information about escalating situations. We see the evidence of this, often in the most heart-breaking images in the media. The problem is that we do not always have the will, and we do not use the tools available to us.

Many States block action, asserting sovereignty and ignoring the rest of the Charter. Others do not want to spend the money. Most have bilateral or national interests. And leaders of countries in political crisis often do not want their actions to be on the Council's agenda.

But we cannot ignore the growing gap between the humanitarian costs of picking up the pieces after conflict and the amount that the United Nations allocates to prevent conflict. The shortfall is growing at an unsustainable rate, while the peace operations budget is increasing year on year.

But this is not about money. It is about saving lives. That is why New Zealand is trying to get the Council working more closely with regional organizations and getting the Council to be more willing to engage at an earlier point with countries in crisis. This is a focus of

our presidency, and it will continue to be a focus of our work when we come off the Council.

Beyond the Security Council, parts of the United Nations system are stepping up. There have been significant steps forward on development, climate, financing, humanitarian issues and disaster risk reduction. These issues are of significant importance to our closest development partners, small island developing States.

For economic development to be fully realized, the Sustainable Development Goals must be implemented by all. But developments here in the United Nations do not exist in a vacuum, apart from the global economy and trading system. Sustainable economic development is a key driver of global growth, prosperity and, most of all, stability. This requires a fair, rules-based trading system, more open trade and the removal of trade barriers.

The multilateral trading system has been a critical factor in this respect. Last year, we welcomed an agreement by the World Trade Organization (WTO) to eliminate agricultural export subsidies. This was the first legally binding international trade outcome in agriculture since 1994. This matters for development and will make a real difference for rural communities.

But the types of challenges that the United Nations faces are similar to those that have hindered more progress in the WTO in recent years. New Zealand believes that the WTO needs to do more to set global trade rules. We need it to find common ground that overcomes vested national interests and agree to new international trade commitments that benefit all countries.

In the Asia-Pacific region, closer economic integration through trade agreements such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership will also bring us closer together. Agreements like these will make our region and people better off by setting the conditions for more open and transparent trade. A more prosperous and integrated region will also be a more secure one, and that is in all of our interests.

We must guard against creeping protectionism and be willing to make the case for more economic engagement clearly. We cannot turn inward. We cannot allow fear or narrow domestic interests to turn us away from an open global trading system that has lifted millions out of poverty. Countries that close their borders cannot and do not do business. History has shown that this does not work for our countries. It will not help our peoples, and protectionism will have a chilling effect on our ability to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals.

A decision of critical importance to the future of the United Nations will be made in the coming weeks. In April, I was very pleased to nominate former New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark to be the first United Nations Secretary-General from the Pacific. This is not the time for a business-as-usual appointment of a Secretary-General. We need someone who is up to the job. The next Secretary-General must have the courage, experience and skills necessary to lead this Organisation, to keep it relevant and responsive. I have worked across the political divide from Helen Clark for years, and I know her to be a natural leader. She rallies people together to find common ground, even when the issues are difficult and the differences vast. She gets things done. We think it is time for a Secretary-General like Helen Clark.

I am proud of the contribution that New Zealand is making to the Security Council, but I am keenly aware of the Council's limitations. It is the General Assembly that now needs to act to make the United Nations stronger and more relevant to the world. New Zealand is committed to the principles and values of the United Nations. We will keep working hard for those principles, because we believe that they are vital for a safer, more prosperous future.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of New Zealand for the statement he has just made.

Mr. John Key, Prime Minister of New Zealand, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by Mr. Matteo Renzi, President of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Italy

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Italy.

Mr. Matteo Renzi, President of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Italy, was escorted to the rostrum.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Matteo Renzi, President of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Italy, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. Renzi (Italy) (*spoke in Italian; interpretation provided by the delegation*): As we approach the close of this day, I feel the responsibility to refer from this rostrum to the statement addressed to all of us by the President of the United States, Barack Obama (see A/71/PV.8). In summarizing the past eight years of his presidency and his relationship with the United Nations, he highlighted how the international context today is riven by a deep division between the world of fear and the world of courage, between the world of resentment and the world of hope, and between anger and opportunity.

A new season is therefore beginning, one filled with opportunities and possibilities, but also with unprecedented threats and difficulties that, until a short while ago, had seemed in all likelihood to be very remote. Foremost among them is the threat of terrorism to our cities, to everyday life. Terrorism no longer strikes only conventional targets, but rather the human dimension: a theatre, a restaurant, a museum, a stadium. Also pressing are the risks connected with pandemics, which are sometimes exaggerated but very often constitute grave risks, as well as the risks connected to the environment, to which this community of women and men, together with my colleagues, was able to give a response by signing the important Paris Agreement on Climate Change this past April.

But there are also risks linked with other events that combine to make the future seem more a time of concern than of hope, from risks connected to natural disasters — one of which Italy experienced a few weeks ago in Amatrice, Cumuli and Arquata — to the great questions concerning migration and the worries that that phenomenon instils in the hearts of people, the questions it raises and the difficulties it presents. The future has therefore become more and more a place of doubt, of fear. Yet we need to choose the road of hope, the road of possibility, the road of opportunity.

The problems are not in fact theoretical problems that need to be tackled by an assembly of experts. These problems have a face: it is the face of Omran, the Syrian boy, shell-shocked, covered in blood, looking with his big eyes not so much at the photographer's lens as at the hearts of each one of us; it is the eyes of Nadia, the Yazidi girl whom I met yesterday, who escaped from the violence of Da'esh and is today a courageous witness in a battle on behalf of human rights, of women's rights, of freedom.

They are challenges and threats for which borders no longer exist. They are in the hearts of our cities and sometimes on the outskirts of European cities, which have often forgotten the true sense of threats inside our borders rather than outside them. Every reference to what happened between Paris and Brussels is deliberate.

I therefore wondered, in conveying the greetings of Italy, which voice from Rome I should bring to those issues. It would be nice, of course, to share with the Assembly the words of hope and also of pride that characterize the concrete acts of saving hundreds of thousands of human lives from the Mediterranean — lives otherwise condemned by desperation — by the Italian women and men wearing the uniform of the Navy or the Coast Guard.

It would be nice to bring to each member of the General Assembly the pride and the voice of the Italians who work in the fields of culture, education and research; of Italians who, together with other Europeans, are leading the European mission that in a few weeks will see for the first time a European spacecraft land on Mars, on 19 October, in exactly one month — a sign of the research that is making Europe not only a place of technocrats and bureaucrats, but also a place looking toward the future.

Yet I would like to propose a different, even provocative image. The image of Rome that I would like to propose is that of Aeneas. Aeneas is the man of the journey. Mythology is filled with examples of people who set out on journeys. Some set out on a journey to return home, like Odysseus. And some, like Aeneas, chose to journey to create a new city, a new civilization.

Aeneas sets out on a journey carrying on his shoulders his ailing father. It is a sign of a generation that is not afraid to assume its responsibilities and that believes that the experience of the elderly is still an absolute value and will go so far as to bear on its shoulders the added burden of history. Aeneas is the man who ensures for his son, Ascanius, the possibility of going on to live and to found the great history of Rome. But Aeneas is the man who, in the foundation myth, is the bearer of pietas, the sense of profound respect, halfway between the religious value and

the profound sense of cultural identity that makes a community worthy of being called a community. Without pietas, without compassion for others, there is no room for community. And this is why, to my mind, it is essential that we tackle the challenge launched this morning from this rostrum by Barack Obama with the great value of pietas and the building of communities to which the myth of Aeneas refers.

This is how Italy will tackle the challenges of 2017: by participating in the Security Council, a responsibility that it will share with the Netherlands. It will participate in the Council, which will see a new Secretary-General, with the assumption of responsibility and the conviction that the Sustainable Development Goals, the challenges associated with environmental and technological sustainability and the building of an ever-stronger community will reflect the values that have made our history great. In 2017 Italy will participate in the life of the international community by hosting, on 25 March, the States members of the European Union for the sixtieth anniversary of the signing of the European Treaty, with the goal of making of Europe not merely an evocation of history but rather a new chapter in a book to be written with increased ideals, dreams, horizons and vision, not with a tiring and repetitive day-by-day listing of bureaucratic rules and decisions.

Italy will lead the work of the Group of Seven (G-7), which will meet at a splendid site in Sicily — that land of great culture and great values — by the Greek theatre in Taormina, facing Mount Etna with the Mediterranean Sea before it bathing the shores of that extraordinary region. The agenda will focus on the actions that we have been discussing today: increasing our contributions to development cooperation and investments in education. For we must not forget that, if the terrorist problem has its origins in theatres of war, there is also a terrorist problem originating in the abandoned outskirts of our cities, and the only weapon that can counter such terrorism is an enormous investment in education and human capital.

We are very proud that the Italian Government has adopted a law, with the support of representatives of Parliament, that stipulates that for every euro invested in security, policing, cybertechnology and cybersecurity, one euro must be invested in culture, education, recreation, preschool education, theatres and other venues that nurture the spirit and the soul, because that is another way to fight the crisis of our era.

We will ensure that the meeting of the G-7 serves as an important occasion to reflect on the values of identity and culture, as well as the challenge of food in the double sense of the fight against poverty and starvation, on the one hand, and the value of food security and health awareness, on the other. At the same time, we are convinced that the challenge facing the Security Council, the challenge facing Europe and the challenge facing the G-7 share the same root, based on the same blueprint.

It is our duty as Italians to bring our voice and our contribution to the United Nations in seeking and identifying ancient values with a new inflection. Today, the pietas of Aeneas has become an opportunity to build a new world based on hope and not on resentment, hatred or anger. Our people, our men and women, continue to work to serve the ideals of peace. They include our women and men in diplomacy and politics, and the women and men who serve our country by wearing a uniform in Afghanistan and in Somalia, by protecting the Mosul Dam in an area fundamental to the future of our planet, and by serving in the Balkans as well, in particular in Serbia. They are security professionals with additional features, namely, the priority they place on humanity.

The women and men who make us proud to be a part of the Italian heritage know that we have not originated from nothing, but rather from the tradition to which I have referred, one that finds its highest expression represented by the Mediterranean Sea. The Mediterranean is the sea that the Romans called Mare Nostrum — our sea. It is the sea where today hundreds and thousands of people seek refuge as they flee from war, from hunger and from poverty. The responsibility for that part of the world has become our ever-growing burden.

In comparison, while we can say that progress has been made in Libya since last year, too little has been accomplished by the international community, particularly Europe, in transforming the Mediterranean Sea into a place where we meet the challenge of dignity. If we do not prioritize the values of humanity and pietas in that geographic area, in that corner of the world, we will have betrayed our tradition. That is why Italy accepts the challenge launched today by the President of the United States to the General Assembly by stating that we will always be on the side of democracy, freedom, values and ideals, with the determination that flows from those who have a great dream and a

great vision, but also at the same time the deep desire to make politics into a noble and concrete activity, by intervening without leaving the responsibility for follow-up to others and by fully embracing the deeper meaning of the challenge that we, for our part, call humanity.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Italy for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Matteo Renzi, President of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Italy, was escorted from the rostrum.

The meeting rose at 9.15 p.m.